

The First Grade News
Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor
October 22, 2004
Morah Eileen

תודה רבה *Todah Rabah* Thank you to all of the first graders, **Hava, Leah, Elana, Roxanne, Eva, Louis, Danielle, Leah Shira, Ori, Maya, Sarah, Yotam, Einav, Miriam, and Abigail.** You continue to show such good teamwork.

תודה רבה *Todah Rabah* **Thank you to Miriam and her family,** who beautified our class Sharing Box. The labels are charming and colorful. Thank you for that act of kindness.

תודה רבה *Todah Rabah* Thank you (and *muchas gracias*) to Silvio, who brought a lot of joy to people of many different ages as he taught us Israeli dances.

מזל טוב *Mazal Tov* to **Sarah,** who did the monkey bars for the first time yesterday. Your classmates were as excited as you were to tell me about it. These are such special moments for teachers.

Welcome to **Eva's maternal grandparents,** who are visiting from Philadelphia.

To all of you baseball fans, enjoy these exciting games!

רפואה שלמה *Refuah Shlemah* (Get well!) to all those in need.

What's up? (Just a bit of what we have been doing...)

- The first graders demonstrated, once again, how good they are at problem-solving. One example, from many, that comes to mind is how well the class rose to the occasion to help solve a wrong size chair - desk situation. They worked together calmly, and then fixed the problem without prompting. I said that I was very impressed with how quickly and kindly they helped a classmate; one child beamed and said proudly, "That's one for the *newsletter*, Morah Eileen!" (I'm glad that they also realized how good this was.) Thank you, first graders, for helping each other learn to be the best you can be.
- By now, you have noticed the big red binders. At the moment, they are mostly coming back and forth empty, but their purpose is to be a place for teachers, parents, and students to put notes, letters, homework and so on. Please check the red binder daily. There may be papers inside sent from the office, Moreh Aharon or me. (Sorry about the size of the binders. Next year...)
- In snack time, we read the book *Vote*, by Eileen Christelow. This is a book about electing a mayor, and two dogs play a prominent role in telling the story. We discussed the election process. Thank you to Ori, who brought in a wonderful book called *If I Were President*. This is a kid-friendly book that explains, in a clear way, the obligation of the

president to "preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the U.S." The first graders came up with their own ideas as to what they would do if they were president. Keep an eye out for these papers on display someday soon. The first graders were surprised to learn that, in the early years of the United States, only white men who owned land had the right to vote, even though the Constitution didn't make this rule. They learned that it took many years until various groups finally had the right to vote. We talked about how, in a real election, they would not be required to fill out a lengthy registration form, take a literacy test, or be asked their shoe size. *(Thanks to Sarah's dad, who reminded us of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in which the literacy test was abolished.)*

- The first graders have published their first novel of the year. They worked extremely hard making a different version of *The Good Bad Cat*.
- Poetry/Literature break - Louis started off our Monday morning with a snappy poem he wrote which began "*I'm in the Dark*." It's on display on our bulletin board. Want to read a funny book of poems about school? Maya introduced us to *The Bug in Teacher's Coffee*, which is a great book of poems. Thanks to Maya for sharing two of her favorites. Miriam showed her love of the *Junie B. Jones'* series by reading a funny section of the book with us.

- Spelling - The weekly spelling test is on Friday. I sent home this week's spelling assignment on Thursday of last week in order to give students more time to complete it. This week, the spelling homework is being sent home today. (We got caught up in our busy day. Sorry.)
- The first graders illustrated their interests and talents which we posted on the class bulletin board two weeks ago. The first graders were delighted to have Leah Shira and her dad set off a mini volcano last week. The class discussed what causes volcanoes and many were able to share having visited sites of volcanoes.
- Suzie, George, Frannie, Peter, and our newly named, Casey, (by vote, of course) are well-liked *members* of our class. Ask your children to tell you a bit about how they help us.
- Students entered the classroom yesterday to *Rhapsody in Blue* by Gershwin. We are highlighting famous American Jews in our commemoration of the 350th anniversary of Jews in America.
- **IMPORTANT NOTICE:** First graders who are interested in running for Student Council need to present their speech on Monday. Voting is on Monday.

Shabbat Shalom! שבת שלום!

